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"The afflicted Baron bade adieu to the mother and Daughter"—Page 20.



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HE eminent painter Bergheim, was a man of noble mind and pure and cultivated taste. He had travelled through Italy as a young artist, for the purpose of studying the works of the great masters ; and as he delighted particularly in subjects from Holy Scripture, and had resolved to devote his art exclusively to sacred, and especially

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to gospel history, he had copied, with untiring diligence and skill, every sacred piece which appeared to him to possess more than ordinary merit. With this treasure of paintings, he returned to Germany, and arranged them with great taste, in a gallery built expressly for the purpose in his own house. In their rich frames, they appeared to great advantage, being beautifully relieved by the light blue tint of the painted walls.

His gallery was, in truth, unrivalled in its kind. The pieces were not brought together by chance, but selected from thousands by a man of exquisite taste, and being copied by a master-hand, they formed a most brilliant collection. Every visiter of taste who inspected the gallery, was, as it were, lifted out of himself, at the sight of so many noble figures, full of heavenly dignity and grace. For all



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that is fair and beautiful, all that is good and great, that does honor to human nature, ennobles it, and raises it nearer to the Godhead, was here most exquisitely painted, from the tender innocence of the child, up to the portrait of the Most Holy among men, in whom the Charity of God revealed itself in the form of Man.

The generous artist was never happier than when he found a man who could relish the beauty of these paintings; and, it was a source of especial gratification to him, that his affectionate wife never entered the gallery without visible emotion, nor looked upon the pictures without unaffected delight. Still more happy was he, that his only daughter, though yet almost a child, took a pleasure in them, wonderful in one of her age, and made remarks on them that astonished him. He had called her, in honor of the celebrated

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painter of that name, Angelica; and he fondly hoped that his beloved child would one day become a distinguished painter, and resemble the noble artist Angelica, in more than in name.

One Sunday morning, after divine worship, the father, mother, and daughter, went into the gallery, and were admiring the paintings. Little Angelica remained standing before one of them. "This picture," said she, "is my favorite among them all."

"I do not wonder at it," said her father, "it is really one of the most beautiful among them. I copied it with especial care and delight, from a painting by your namesake, Angelica, which I saw in Rome."

"Look, dear Angelica," he continued, "the Blessed Virgin Mary is here painted as a tender child of your own age. She is watering these beautiful lilies in the flower-

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pot. A ray from heaven plays round the fair form of the holy child. Her parents are standing by—the father all amazed at the wondrous stream of light, and the affectionate mother filled with holy transport!”

Angelica’s mother was greatly moved, for she, too, had always preferred that picture, and had often gazed upon it devoutly for hours together. It appeared to her that the cheerful innocent face of her own little Angelica, closely resembled the face of Mary in the picture; but she did not remark this to her daughter, lest it might make her vain.

“Dearest Angelica!” she contented herself with saying, “let Mary ever be your model! See how pious and fervent, how soft and gentle, how full of holy innocence her tender face is! See, the pure white lilies are an image of her pure thoughts—of her innocence! May you also always

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bloom in purity and innocence ! That light from heaven which shines around her, beautifully signifies to us, that God delights in innocence ; that all good comes from above ; and, that it is only God who can enlighten and sanctify men. Oh ! be you ever sincerely good and pious, and never cease to pray to God for light and strength from above."

" Yes, dearest Angelica," said her father, " study to be like Mary ; your mother and I will always endeavor to imitate her parents. Hitherto we have ever made it our care to bring you up in piety and virtue. Every day we pray to God, graciously to look down on you, to enlighten you, and make you bloom and prosper, as the flower blooms under the genial sunshine. This moment we renew our purpose and our prayer.

" Oh, heavenly Father," continued he

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clasping his hands, "look down on our dear Angelica, bless our endeavors, and grant that we may rejoice in this, our beloved child, that she may grow up in piety, modesty, and prudence, and ever resemble Mary, the perfect model of all Christian virgins!"

The mother's eyes were filled with tears, and Angelica, raising her lovely eyes to heaven; and clasping her little hands, said, "O gracious Father in heaven! bless me, make me good and pious, make me the joy of my parents." Her parents, with emotion, answered, "Amen."

Such was the good Bergheim; and such the dispositions of his wife and daughter. The family was the best and happiest in the whole country around. The father was constantly engaged in painting, and adorned numberless churches with exceedingly beautiful scriptural pieces; for he

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felt within himself the noble thoughts and emotions, which his art taught him to impress on the canvas. He instructed Angelica in painting ; she made a rapid progress, and surpassed all his expectations, both in skill in her profession, and in the piety, modesty, and prudence of her deportment. To the mother was left the care of the household, which was a model of cleanliness and regularity ; and they lived in the happiest concord, for they were at peace with each other, and with the whole world.

Among the numerous admirers of his art, by whom Bergheim was visited, the most constant was Baron von West, an intelligent and noble-hearted young man. He was the youngest son of a distinguished noble family, and enjoyed a large income from his paternal property. Endowed with a correct taste, and passionately devoted

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to the art of painting, he often spent whole hours with Bergheim, watching the progress of his work ; and Bergheim conversed with him most willingly, especially on painting, gave him, at his own request, instructions in drawing, and became as much attached to him, as if he were his own son.

One morning as Bergheim was sitting at his work in the gallery, where he generally painted during the warm months of the year, Baron von West, dressed with more than usual elegance, walked in, and formally solicited the hand of the fair Angelica.

Bergheim laid down his pencil, stood up, took off his cap, and, after a few moments' reflection, said, "My dear Baron, you do me and my daughter a very great honor. I value it most highly ; but to my great regret I cannot accept it."

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“No!” exclaimed Von West, greatly astonished and confused, “and why not? Have I, my dear Bergheim, in any way forfeited your good opinion? Have you any thing against me?”

“Not the least,” said Bergheim, “but I have, though you may think it a singular resolution, taken it into my head, never to give my daughter in marriage to any man but a painter.”

“But reflect a little, dear Bergheim”—the Baron was commencing—

“No reply can change me on this point,” said Bergheim, “it is absolutely fixed, and nothing can change it. Such is the fact, my dear Baron, however foolish it may seem; and you will only waste words in vain on this matter. But, though, as unfortunate circumstances will have it, you cannot be my son-in-law, I hope we shall still remain good friends, provided you be



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so good as never to say another word on this subject to me or to my wife, much less to my daughter. I wish also, that your visits, otherwise so very agreeable to me, should, if they do not cease altogether, be much less frequent than before."



Baron von West retired, deeply afflicted. He had already satisfied himself of the consent of the mother and of the daughter's inclination, and had not felt the slightest

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doubt that the father also would consent. He returned, therefore, to the mother and daughter, who were waiting, not without some anxiety, the father's answer to the proposal; and with a sorrowful countenance, gave a full account of his positive refusal.

Madam Bergheim immediately ran into the gallery to her husband.

"For heaven's sake," said she, "how can you refuse so coldly the good fortune that is offered to our Angelica?"

"The good fortune!" said the painter calmly, continuing his work, "how do you know it would be a good fortune?"

"How?" continued she, "is not the Baron noble, rich, agreeable, handsome, and virtuous?"

"Yes, most certainly," said the father, "and I, myself, have the highest esteem for him—but, alas! he is no painter."

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“Oh!” said the mother, “I don’t know how you got that whim into your head—to marry our Angelica to a painter. How many good painters do we meet? or are you content to give her to a dauber? for she will have but little room to choose.”

“I hope,” said the artist, “that in due time an eminent painter who may please her, will make his appearance.”

“Ah! how singularly you smile, as you speak,” said the mother. “Either you are not serious in your expectations, or there is something mysterious in the matter. If you know such a painter, why have you never said one word about him, up to the present moment?”

“It was not necessary until now,” said the father, “there had been no question of the marriage of our daughter. There is time enough yet for that. Let her now, while she is in the bloom of life, and unen-

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cumbered with family cares, devote herself to her art, tranquilly and joyfully. God will provide for the future.—And now,” said he warmly, turning to his work, “I should like to be alone; I am just finishing a touch, which, perhaps, may escape me, if I be further interrupted.”

The mother returned quite disconsolate to Baron von West and Angelica, and related the substance of the conversation. “Alas!” said she, in conclusion, “nothing can be done now with the good-hearted, but singular old man. I know him well, when he has once taken any thing into his head, it is impossible to move him.”

The afflicted Baron bade adieu to the mother and daughter. He comforted the weeping Angelica. “For the present,” said he, “I go, since that is the best course that remains for me; but do you continue faithful to me. I hope to return after

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some years, and then to gain the consent of your father, who, notwithstanding his refusal, has still my esteem." Without further explanation, he took his leave.

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Nearly three years had elapsed. Baron von West had written twice a year to Bergheim, and more frequently to the mother; and in his letters to the mother, he always enclosed a few lines to Angelica, in which he spoke most confidently of his hopes, but did not tell on what they were grounded. For a few months his correspondence had been discontinued altogether.

In the mean time, Gerhard, a distinguished painter, who was travelling to perfect himself in his art, paid a visit, for a few weeks, to Bergheim, saw Angelica and her beautiful paintings, and conceiving an ardent wish to make her his wife, wrote to

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Bergheim on his return to his own country, after his travels, and solicited Angelica's hand. With the letter, he forwarded a painting, executed by himself, as a present to Bergheim.

Bergheim could not admire the painting enough. It was really a most exquisite piece. It represented two children, three or four years old, sitting on the grass under a group of alder-trees, and drinking milk out of an earthen bowl. "It is inimitable!" said Bergheim. "The little faces of the children are really charming. The lovely brown eyes and dark hair of the boy; the mild blue eyes and light locks of the girl; and the blooming ruddy cheeks of both children could not be more beautiful. In what brilliant relief do the bright figures of the children stand out from the deep green shade of the alder-trees! Every thing, down to the most delicate detail, is per-

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fect ; even the hue of the earthen vessel, and the pale tints of the spoons, filled with milk, are exhibited in masterly style. Angelica, I certainly will not compel you ; that is not right ; it would be a sin ; but how happy I should be, had you this excellent painter as your husband !”

Angelica was in great affliction ; on the one hand, because she had not yet forgotten Baron West, though she had heard nothing from him for a long time, and on the other, because it was most painful to her, not to comply with the wishes of her father. She knew not what to do, and asked some time for consideration. But, one morning, the Baron unexpectedly arrived. Bergheim himself was from home, with an altar-piece which he had painted for a distant church, where he was also to retouch some faded pictures. The delighted mother instantly conducted the

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Baron to the gallery where Angelica was painting. She started from her work with a loud exclamation of joy.

“Now, my dear mother, and my dear Angelica,” said the Baron, after the first salute, “I trust that you both, and your father himself, will be content with me. I return to you a painter, and though I am not very eminent, yet I trust I am not unworthy of the name.”

He had brought with him two little pictures, which he himself had painted; the subject of one was flowers, the other was a fruit-piece.

He first exhibited the fruit-piece. The fruits were elegantly arranged in a little fruit-basket. Angelica was enraptured.

“Oh, how charming!” said she, “inimitable! This bunch of grapes is like transparent gold. These especially, from which the skin is partly stripped, are so clear,



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that you can see the inner texture and kernels! You can count the veins in this dark green vine-leaf; and that other one has the true autumnal yellow and purple tint! And see this pale-green peach! It has been breathed upon, as it were, with the loveliest red, and appears softer and more delicate than velvet! So true, so like nature does it look, that one almost feels inclined to pluck and eat it. The purple-streaked apple, with its bright green leaves; the yellow pears; and the blue-coated plums, are scarcely inferior to the grapes or the peaches! and, then, the wasp there, it is so life-like, one is almost tempted to drive it away."

The Baron next showed his flower-sketch. "It is beautiful!" exclaimed Angelica; "this basket of flowers is more charming than even the basket of fruits. Yes, that is indeed a rose—it wants

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nothing but the perfume. The large dew-drops which hang on the green leaves actually reflect the red hue of the rose, and look as if they would fall every moment. How beautiful are those soft blue gilly-flowers! Each flower ruffles its neighbor; and the leaves and flowers are all most delicately shaded. How rich the hues of these pinks!—here dark-red, and there snowy-white; and on this one—oh, how beautiful!—is a speckled butterfly—a butterfly, finished to perfection! You almost fear to touch it, lest you shake the dust from its wings. Every moment you expect to see it move them and fly away. Ah, dear Charles, you have made a wonderful proficiency! it astonishes me. The extraordinary pains you must have taken, are to me the most convincing proofs of your affection.”

“It certainly costs much toil, and many

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long years' practice," said the Baron, "to be able to paint even a rose or a gilly-flower. A flower has always appeared to me a beautiful subject for this art; for every flower is a benevolent design of the Supreme Artist—a work of the Creator, who first sketched it in all its beauty, then painted it before us, and has even drawn its outlines in the little seed, invisible to our eyes. But, alas!" continued he, "what are these paintings of flowers and fruits, when compared with the beautiful portrait of the heavenly Friend of children, at which you are engaged? How poor are they, when compared to the pictures in this hall; these soul-exciting images of illustrious men, of holy angels, and of Him who is exalted above all men and angels! Ah! when I look around upon the Angelical Salutation, the Nativity, the Holy Family, the Resurrection of Lazarus, the

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Last Supper, and our Saviour expiring with His crown of thorns besprinkled with blood, or arisen and standing in the midst of his rejoicing disciples—how deeply do I feel the dignity and power of this art! What heavenly innocence, humility, devotion, and fervor do I contemplate in the image of the Blessed Virgin! What brightness—what exemption from all earthly cares and earthly sorrows—in the face of the angel! See how, on the noble countenances of these apostles, the ‘one faith’ and the ‘one love’ is revealed in different forms and features. And there, Christ, the Man-God, combines divine dignity with human meekness: who does not feel—who does not see, that God has there manifested himself in human form to man—that man is more than dust, and that virtue is the only thing that gives true nobility to men, and makes them like unto God?”

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He was silent for a few moments "When I look on my poor flowers and fruits, my dear Angelica," he mournfully resumed, "I fear that your father will not be satisfied with me, and that, perhaps, I have labored in vain."

"Not satisfied with you!" eagerly exclaimed Angelica, "he will be overjoyed, astonished, enchanted, to find you, thus unexpectedly, so superior an artist."

Her mother, however, was uneasy, and told how much the father was taken with Gerhard, and how delighted he was with the picture which he had sent him. Baron von West requested to see it.

"It is really most beautiful," said he. "I acknowledge that I am far inferior to Gerhard. He has chosen for himself a nobler department of the art, than my talents allowed me to aspire to; the human figure, though it were only the lovely

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figure of a little child, is the noblest work of the art, as man himself is the noblest work of God upon this earth. All other creatures, fruits, flowers, and insects, bear, it is true, the impress of His wisdom and goodness, and make known His beneficence ; but man was created after the image of God, and is of heavenly race. I therefore reverently yield the palm to Gerhard's work."

He walked up and down the hall for a few moments.

"A thought strikes me," he suddenly exclaimed, "which may surprise your father, and, perhaps, still gain the victory for me. As you may see from my two little pictures, I have devoted my study to the painting, not only of fruits and flowers, but also of insects ; and, certainly, unless my friends and acquaintances flatter me, I have succeeded most satisfactorily. Now

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I remember that your father used to have a great aversion to flies, because he feared they would soil his beautiful pictures, or their golden frames ; and though he is so good and benevolent that he would not hurt the smallest of God's creatures, yet he would often pursue a fly with a sort of phrensy, whenever he happened to see one here in the hall, and never could rest, until he had succeeded in capturing it. Many a time we used to amuse ourselves on this subject ; but he always took our innocent jests in good part. My idea is, to paint a fly on Gerhard's picture, which will not injure the piece, but, on the contrary, enhance its value. Flies are fond of lighting on a vessel filled with milk, and the painted fly will so deceive your father, that he will imagine it to be alive. He will regard it as his enemy ; but I choose it now as my advocate, and friendly intercessor."

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The mother and daughter approved his plan. They left him alone, and he at once set himself to his work. He succeeded so admirably, that Angelica, herself, when in summoning him to dinner, she looked at the picture, thought it was a living fly she saw.

In a fortnight's time, the father returned, late one evening, to his family. They told him nothing of the arrival of the Baron, who was staying with some of his relatives in the town. Next morning, as the father was sitting at his work, in his cap and dressing-gown, and painting busily, Baron von West walked into the gallery, accompanied by Angelica and her mother.

Bergheim welcomed him cordially, though his arrival, at that precise time, was not very agreeable to him. He already looked upon Gerhard, the painter, as his son-in-



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law ; and he feared that the nobleman might prove a formidable rival, and that Angelica might not be as willing to marry Gerhard, as she had hitherto appeared. He resolved, therefore, to show Gerhard's beautiful picture, at once, to the Baron ; and then, when the great perfection of the work was duly acknowledged, to declare to him, that he had fixed on the author of that piece, as his destined son-in-law.

The Baron gave the picture its due praise. Bergheim expatiated upon its beauties, one after another.

"I appeal to yourself," said he. "Are they not a lovely little pair? Are not these little heads, with their smiling faces and curling locks, literally angelic? So happy, so content, are the little ones with their bowl of milk, that they appear to have no other wish in this wide world ;

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and seem to say to us, 'Thus happy could your dear little ones be, if you would not torment yourselves with empty cares.' The whole piece is finished in faultless style. That earthen bowl, with its brilliant varnish, pleases me better than a real vessel of massive gold ; and even that lackered spoon, almost overflowing with milk, which the little girl seems to be raising to her lip, slowly and cautiously lest she should spill it, is"—

He suddenly stopped, for at that moment he discovered the fly on the rim of the spoon.

"Ah! ha!" said he, "what are *you* doing there? What brought you here? Has the painted milk enticed you? You shall not escape unpunished."

He pulled off his cap, and endeavored two or three times to drive away the fly—but in vain. "Are you not going, you ob

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stinate creature?" he cried out angrily. "Then you shall forfeit your life on the spot."

He struck the fly with his cap. "What!" he exclaimed, in astonishment, "have I not hit you? are you not dead? no!" Again he struck deliberately and forcibly.



"What can this be?" said he. He looked closely at the fly—he felt it with

his finger—he shook his head, and put on his spectacles.

“Verily,” cried he, in the greatest amazement, “it is painted—as I live—painted! Who did this?”

“Pardon me this innocent trick, my dear father,” said the Baron. “To gain your good-will, and to deserve the hand of Angelica, I became a painter. I did not wish to say any thing of my intention until now, as I was uncertain whether I could succeed. I would certainly have made a much greater proficiency in the art, had I had the benefit of your instructions, but circumstances made that impossible. I expect to be able to produce more worthy fruits of my labor, than these trifles.”

Bergheim was both surprised and delighted. “Truly,” said he, still closely inspecting the fly through his spectacles, “truly, your fly is a master-piece. How

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nicely does it fix its slender legs, and stretch out its little trunk to drink a drop of milk on the spoon! How delicately all the colors of the rainbow play on its filmy wings! Great an enemy as I am to flies, I must admire this one. It is a perfect fly."

Baron von West then showed the other two pictures he had brought with him, the flower-piece and the fruit-piece.

"My dear Baron," said Bergheim, "I have now no objection to the marriage. You have not only completely removed the objection I had to it—you have, moreover, given me a decisive proof, that you have a sincere affection for my daughter. I must now tell you the whole truth: I was opposed to the marriage, not so much because you were not a painter, as because you had no art or profession at all, by which you could support your future wife.

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Riches I thought unsafe, especially in these times of war. I hold it absolutely necessary, that a man, be he rich or poor, should be able to earn his bread. I am convinced, also, that a man who has no certain occupation, can never live happy and content, but must fall into a thousand follies, or, perhaps, vices and crimes. I accordingly said within myself, the Baron has taste and talent for the art; he shows great ability, even when working only for his amusement; if he really desire to have Angelica's hand, he can easily become a painter. He has leisure and time enough. Such were my feelings. I could not think of directly proposing to you to learn the art of painting. I thought it would be demanding too much, that a man, especially a nobleman, should go serve his time to a painter. I left the matter to your own feelings; but it was secretly my most

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cherished wish ; and that wish you have now realized to my fullest satisfaction. My dear son, may God bless you and my daughter, as I and my wife both now give you our blessing."

The marriage of Baron von West and Angelica was celebrated with all the joy of a domestic festival. They plighted their faith before an altar, the altar-piece of which represented the marriage of the Blessed Virgin, painted in a superior style by Bergheim himself.

At dinner Bergheim was in his happiest flow of spirits. "This day," said he, "all flies, provided they are not too greedy, may take share of our wedding banquet."

The marriage of Baron von West and Angelica was the happiest in the world. He, as well as Angelica and her father, devoted himself entirely to painting, and

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that art contributed exceedingly to enhance their enjoyment. Both parents and children led a most happy life.

“How much happier am I now,” would the Baron often say, “when each morning invites me to labor, than formerly, when my first thought used to be with what amusements I could while away the empty hours, or rather, kill the precious time.”

And the young painter soon had cause to praise his father-in-law's wisdom for other reasons. For when his paternal property fell, by the chances of war, into the hands of the enemy, and his annual revenues were cut off, his art still brought him in a competent income. “You were right,” said he to Bergheim, “to give art the preference over riches; a fixed occupation in life brings happiness and innumerable joys.”



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“I am delighted, my dear son,” said the father, “that you are convinced of this. Industry and labor secure our daily bread, the nourishment of our bodies; art enlightens and throws a charm over life; but our holy religion is all in all. She is the food of our souls. Without her, what were the labor of our hands? what, but a soulless, painful grovelling in the dust of the earth? Religion must ever be the soul of all—our most valued art—the soul of our souls.”

Angelica's parents lived to an advanced age. She was their joy and their crown. She and her husband were equally attentive to the beloved old couple; Angelica, the eminent artist, was also the most careful of housewives, the most affectionate of wives, and the best of daughters; and her parents would often say, “Dearest Angelica, all our wishes, hopes, and prayers,

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once poured out from our hearts before that image of the most blessed of all virgins and mothers, have been more than realized in thee !”

